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RUCNISL/ISLAMIC COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
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C O N F I D E N T I A L KUALA LUMPUR 001567

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FOR EAP AND NEA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 10/25/2017

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KISL](#) [IS](#) [MY](#)

SUBJECT: MALAYSIA BACKS MEPP, EXPECTS INVITE TO U.S.-HOSTED
TALKS

REF: KUALA LUMPUR 1551 - ABBAS IN MALAYSIA

Classified By: Political Section Chief Mark D. Clark for reasons 1.4 (b
and d).

¶1. (C) Summary: Palestinian President Abbas sought Malaysia's general backing in future peace talks with Israel and discussed Malaysian aid to Palestine during his October 20 meeting with Malaysian Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, according to the Foreign Ministry. Malaysia understands that the U.S. has not yet issued invitations for the Annapolis conference, but expects to be invited. PM Abdullah firmly backs the future peace conference if it offers tangible results, and he soon will write to President Bush on the subject. End Summary.

¶2. (C) Polchief called on the Malaysian Foreign Ministry official responsible for the OIC, Ambassador Ibrahim Abdullah, on October 24 to discuss the October 20-21 visit of Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas (reftel). Ibrahim stated that the discussions during the visit were not very substantive regarding the Middle East peace process (MEPP). During Abbas' 45-minute discussion with Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, Abbas sought Malaysia's general support in the peace talks and did not raise any particular negotiating positions. PM Abdullah urged Abbas to unify the Palestinian side by somehow healing the division with Hamas. Much of the talk centered on bilateral assistance from Malaysia, including Malaysian funding for repairs for a Palestinian aircraft in Jordan and future Malaysian training of Palestinian bureaucrats.

¶3. (C) Abbas presented PM Abdullah with a long list of country participants, including Malaysia, to be invited to the anticipated peace conference in Annapolis, Ambassador Ibrahim said. Polchief noted that the U.S. had not yet made any decisions on invitations. Ibrahim acknowledged this, and clearly indicated PM Abdullah understood. Ibrahim added, however, that the Prime Minister fully anticipated that he would be invited based on earlier comments by Jordan, Abbas's remarks, and Foreign Minister Hamid's interpretation of an earlier conversation with Secretary Rice.

¶4. (C) Ambassador Ibrahim reiterated Malaysia's strong support for the future Annapolis peace conference, as voiced by the Prime Minister during the Abbas visit, particularly if the talks offer a chance of producing a tangible result that addresses the Israel-Palestine conflict. He rejected Iran's calls to boycott the conference, referring to these as counter-productive and nonsensical. Ibrahim added that

Malaysia did not believe it advisable to address Israel-Syria issues (the Golan Heights) during the Palestine talks, as this would overly complicate the discussions. Ibrahim stated that PM Abdullah soon would send a letter to President Bush regarding the MEPP, a letter which Ibrahim was drafting.

KEITH